

## **Remarks**

### **1. Summary of the Office Action**

In the office action mailed August 24, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 11-15, 21, 22, 28-33, 35-37, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over a combination of U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/01513131 (Stead) and U.S. Patent No. 5,764,188 (Ghosh), the Examiner rejected claims 6, 8, 9, 16, 18, 23, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over a combination of Stead, Ghosh, and U.S. Patent No. 5,508,707 (LeBlanc), and the Examiner rejected claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over a combination of Stead, Ghosh, and U.S. Patent No. 6,466,796 (Jacobson).

Further, the Examiner objected to claims 7, 10, 17, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, and 38-41 as being dependent on a rejected base claim but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### **2. Response to Claim Objections and Rejections**

Applicant notes that the Examiner has indicated the allowability of claims 7, 10, 17, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, and 38-41 in each of the office actions, beginning with the office action mailed April 15, 2004. By the present response, Applicant has amended the claims to accept the allowability that the Examiner originally set forth in the first office action. Thus, Applicant has put various claims in the form that the Examiner indicated would be allowable in the office action mailed April 15, 2004, omitting some of the later added limitations in favor of the earlier limitations. The following subsections describe the amendments and claim status for the Examiner's convenience.

**a. Claims 1 and 6-8**

Applicant has amended claim 1 to omit the limitations added previously and to instead add to original claim 1 the limitations of original claims 6 and 7, and Applicant has cancelled claims 6-8. The Examiner indicated that the subject matter of claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claims 1 and 6. Rather than amending claim 7 in this manner, Applicant has amended claim 1 in this manner. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 1 is now allowable.

**b. Claims 2-5 and 9**

Claims 2-5 remain dependent from claim 1. Applicant has corrected a clear typographical error in claim 2, and Applicant has made minor amendments to claims 3 and 4, to avoid redundancy with amended claim 1. In addition, Applicant has amended claim 9 to depend from claim 1 instead of now-cancelled claim 6. Applicant submits that claims 2-5 and 9 are now allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 1.

**c. Claim 10**

Applicant has amended claim 10 to include the limitations of original claims 1, 6, and 9 from which claim 10 depended. The Examiner indicated that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten independent form including the limitations of claims 1, 6, and 9. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 10 is now allowable.

**d. Claims 11 and 16-17**

Applicant has amended claim 11 to omit the limitations added previously and to instead add to original claim 11 the limitations of original claims 16 and 17, and Applicant has cancelled claims 16-17. The Examiner indicated that the subject matter of claim 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claims 11 and 16. Rather than

amending claim 17 in this manner, Applicant has amended claim 11 in this manner. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 11 is now allowable.

**e. Claims 12-15 and 18**

Claims 12-15 and 18 remain dependent from claim 11. Applicant has made minor amendments to these claims, to avoid redundancy with amended claim 11. Applicant submits that claims 12-15 and 18 are now allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 11.

**f. Claim 19**

Applicant has amended claim 19 to include the limitations of original claims 11 and 18, from which claim 19 depended. The Examiner indicated that claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claims 11 and 18. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 19 is now allowable.

**g. Claim 20-34**

Applicant has amended claim 20 to include the limitations of original claims 11 and 18, from which claim 20 depended. The Examiner indicated that claim 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claims 11 and 18. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 20 is now allowable.

Applicant has amended claim 21 to depend from claim 20 instead of claim 11. Claim 22 remains dependent from claim 21. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 21-22 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 20.

The Examiner indicated that claim 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has instead amended claim 24 depend from claim 21 instead of claim 23, and

Applicant has cancelled claim 23. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 24 is allowable for at least the reason that it depends from allowable claim 21.

Applicant has made a minor amendment to claim 25 to avoid redundancy with amended claim 21. Claim 25 remains dependent from claim 21. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 25 is allowable for at least the reason that it depends from allowable claim 21.

The Examiner indicated that claims 26-27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, claims 26-27 remain dependent from claim 25. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 26-27 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 25.

Claims 28-34 remain dependent ultimately from claim 11. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 28-34 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend ultimately from allowable claim 11.

**h.      Claim 35**

Applicant has cancelled claim 35. Therefore, the rejection of this claim is moot.

**i.      Claims 36-42**

Applicant has amended claim 36 to include the limitations of original claims 37 and 38, and Applicant has cancelled claims 37-38. The Examiner indicated that the subject matter of claim 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claims 36 and 37. Rather than amending claim 38 in this manner, Applicant has amended claim 36 in this manner. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 36 is now allowable.

The Examiner indicated that claim 39 and 40 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Instead, Applicant has amended claims 39 and 40 to depend from claim 36 instead of claim 38. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 39-40 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable claim 36.

The Examiner indicated that claim 41 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, claim 41 remains dependent from claim 40. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 41 is allowable for at least the reason that it depends from allowable claim 40.

Applicant has further amended claim 42 to depend from claim 36 instead of claim 37. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 42 is allowable for at least the reason that it depends from allowable claim 36.

### 3. Conclusion

Now pending in this application are claims 1-5, 9-15, 24-34, 36, and 39-42, of which claims 1, 10, 11, 19, 20, and 36 are independent.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that all of the presently pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner pass this application to issuance.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any aspect of this application, the Examiner is welcome to call the undersigned at (312) 913-2141.

Respectfully submitted,

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